

West Hartford Substance Abuse Prevention Commission (SAPC)
Meeting Minutes
May 8, 2014

Attendees: Amal Ali, Helen Drohan, David Ferrer, Jamahl Hines, Dan Jordan, Joe Kalache, Yifrah Kaminer, Cheryl Kassow, Brooks Loomis, Leo Negrón, Donna Namnoum, Zulynette Morales, Mikayla Oliveras, Jonathan Reach-Longo, Jean Schensul, Steve Schensul, Marisa Tamayo, Pat Tyler, Graham Wilcox

Welcome from Chair / Introductions / Approve Minutes / Early Departures

In chairperson's absence, Pat Tyler welcomed everyone and introductions were made. The May minutes were approved.

Yifrah Kaminer announced that the UCONN Health Center received new funding to offer free treatment to those affected by substance abuse and depression. This treatment will exclude the use of any medication and is in collaboration with a study that Duke University is conducting related to depression.

Lead by Example Update – Institute for Community Research

Amal Ali from the Institute for Community Research announced that *Lead by Example* programming has taken place in the homerooms at Hall High. The *Lead by Example* group is currently designing t-shirts and working on a booth for *Celebrate! West Hartford*. Marisa Tamayo from King Philip Middle School suggested that future project ideas include partnering with *Cross Age Connections* to provide mentoring at the middle school level. This would take on broader issues such as anti-bullying.

Jean Schensul announced that ICR will be hiring 4 teens (*2 Hall, 2 Conard*) over the summer to work on the *Lead by Example* campaign. They will help by working on the campaign at Hall and Conard High Schools, planning events, and managing the website.

Focus on the Household – Fear Based or Positive Message?

Pat Tyler reintroduced the campaign's differing strategy types for parents: *Inspirational* vs. *Provocative*. She asked whether using the tagline mentioned in the last meeting - "*Are You Dealing Drugs to Your Children at Home?*" - would be considered too provocative or just enough to get the audience's attention.

Dan Jordan from ICR stated that from his observation, he had noticed that other commissions are making their campaigns more widely visible. The question then became "*Where else should we be placing our energy & efforts in an attempt to make the Commission's efforts more recognizable?*" Jean Schensul and Steve Schensul both suggested that possible outlets for getting the message out could be local papers (*Hartford Courant, etc.*) and NPR spots.

The conversation then turned toward "content" and how to make the message more inclusive overall so as to capture a much larger audience. After Dan Jordan shared the encouraging results from a recent substance use survey among local teens, Yifrah Kaminer took this opportunity to emphasize education and informing the parents as to the inevitable hazards and new dangers they are to expect with all of the recent policy and law changes affecting the prescription and use of medical marijuana. Yifrah

believes the legalization and decriminalization of marijuana will drastically change the future landscape. Tying in Dan Jordan's survey results, the reduced statistics on regular alcohol consumption, along with how accessible marijuana will become due to prescriptions, Yifrah's studies indicate that marijuana use will surpass alcohol use and become more prevalent by the year 2020.

Campaign – When to Start

Commission members discussed the timeline for the Household campaign. Yifrah Kaminer stressed that it has become an urgent matter and that prevention is better than intervention. Helen Drohan listed all of the items that would have to be coordinated and finalized before next month's meeting on June 5th. Donna Namnoum expressed that given all of the items that need to be addressed we should kick off the campaign during the next school year. Steve Schensul mentioned how speakers will need to be lined up and confirmed. Helen Drohan suggested that Spring 2015 would be more realistic than June 2014.

The group agreed that the planning and discussion will continue during the June 5th meeting.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Brooks Loomis

May 10, 2014

